NAVY, NEGROES IN *- 1940

Racial Discrimination Is Fast Disappearing In The Navy Says Retired Seaman

Claims Japanese And Filipinos No Longer Sought For Enlistment; Negroes U. S. Choice

Urges Negro Youths To Enter

"Negroes are not restricted to the Mesman's Branch in the Navy," stated Richard Berry, 63 year old retired commissioned seaman, 1001 N. E. 6th Street last week who is of the opinion that racial discrimination is fast disappearing as far as the Negro is concerned. To substantuate his assertion Berry cited the fact that at the time of his retirement on October 1, 1934, Negroes were fast filling the places of Japanese and Filipinos, who, he said are not now being sought for enlistment by the government.

Berry was quizzed regarding the treatment of Negroes in the navy and the branches which they might enter, following the declaration of several seamen that they could only enter certain divisions of the service and recent startling disclosures of various forms of army discriminations made public through the Associated Negro Press.

"However, success in other branches of the navy depends on hard labor and the willingness to begin at the bottom of things and work up," he stated.

Berry who exhibited papers giving him naval classification of 1st class Engineerman at the time of his retirement said that he began in the lowest capacity in the mechanical department which is coal passer. He worked his way from that position to fireman, first and second class oiler and finally to his present rank. At the time of his retirement he claims he was eligible for promotion as chief mechanic. He claims Negroes were in all ranks of these divisions and there were also many first class mechanics and electricians. Berry stated he served with crews on the following vessels: USS Wilmington, USS Albany, USS Bainbridge and USS Oregon.

Although there are no commissioned Negro officers in the navy Berry cherishes an optimistic outlook on the matter and prophesied that in a few years we hope to see remaining barriors let down and Negroes admitted in all fields. He attributed the Negro's failure to gain high rank in the navy to his lack of courage and patience in fighting the various forms of prejudice outside naval regulations.

Berry said if Negro youths want to enter some special field of study in the navy, they would after enlistment be given a possible 9 months preparatory course in the desired branch and would be later sent to school for technical training.

Berry hopes the navy will offer more varied types of training for Negro youths and expressed a desire to see more Negroes enter this field. His tales of adventure on the high seas makes him a very popular figure in the community.

Chattanooga, Tenn., Daily Times
May 14, 1940

4 NEGRO SAILORS VISIT HOMES HERE

Former Second District and Howard Students Will Be Assigned to Ships Soon

Four Negro boys, former students of Second district and Howard High schools, returned to the city Saturday for a two-week furlough from the Norfolk naval station, where they have been in training since March 8.

James Edward Hamner and Theodore Mathis, of Howard, and Willie J. Germany and Edward Alexander Hughley, of Second district, decided last February to quit school here and join the United States navy.

They were successful in all preliminary examinations here and in Nashville, and assigned to the Norfolk station for training as mess attendants. After three months' intensive drill and work, they have been granted two weeks to visit home before being assigned to a ship.

Each of the boys is 18 years old. They are creating considerable interest in their naval uniforms as they describe experiences to former playmates up and down East and West Ninth street. They will address the boys of Second district and Howard High schools some time this week.

FRANK A. PILGRIM RETIRES FROM USN

Frank A. Pilgrim of 507 Twenty-first Street, Northeast, was commended recently by H. R. Stark, chief of naval operations, in a letter on the former's retirement after 30 years in the naval service.

Mr. Stark's letter follows:

"On the occasion of your having completed 30 years' service in the U. S. Navy and Coast Guard, the chief of naval operations takes great pleasure in adding his congratulations to those you have received from the chief of the bureau of navigation.

FRANK A. PILGRIM

"During your service you were issued a Good Conduct Medal, two Good Conduct Pins, a Spanish Campaign Badge and a West Indies Medal which are lasting evidence of your faithfulness and devotion to duty.

"It was my good fortune to have you at my quarters for the last year of your service and I am happy to say that your performance of duty has been excellent during the time I have known you. Please accept every good wish for a long and happy retirement."

Mobile, Ala. Press
June 7, 1940

Two Colored Youths Accepted Into Navy

Two colored youths who enlisted in the United States navy through the recruiting office in Mobile have been accepted for duty and are on their way to Norfolk, it was announced today by J. E. Green, office in charge of the local station. They were William P. Lindo of Moss Point and Merchant E. Singleton of Atmore.

Green said the station is accepting both white and colored men of acceptable ages and physical requirements in an effort to supplement the current naval expansion program. The officer said the navy is seeking to fill the program by September.

Chattanooga, Tenn., Free Press
May 13, 1940

Colored Youth Enlisted For Navy Service Here

David Childress Hicks, 19, 1021 Grove Place, was the third Negro youth to be accepted for enlistment in the United States Navy through the Chattanooga recruiting station this month. Hicks will train to be a mess attendant.

Eight white men will go to Nashville for final examination before enlistment Tuesday. If all are accepted the Chattanooga station's enlarged May quota of 18 white and three Negro, will be complete.

Pensacola, Fla. News
May 27, 1940

WANT HOUSING FOR NAVY MEN

Suggestion from Edgar R. Day that the negro low-rent housing area, Attucks Court, on West Cervantes, be temporarily converted into quarters for increasing enlisted personnel at the Naval Air station was received by the Pensacola Housing Authority today.

Attaches of the housing office said the suggestion would be taken up at the next regular meeting of the authority Tuesday, June 4, but indicated unofficially that government regulations would prohibit the use of the project for government personnel.

Day's letter to the authority stated: "In view of the arrangement and layout of the project it would appear that it would be possible to locate both officers and enlisted men in these apartments and I would thank you to consider the advisability of this and if you feel that these apartments might be rented to Navy personnel until such time as other housing arrangements or facilities are made available, I would thank you to contact the commandant of the Naval Air station in order that some arrangement might be worked out and scale of rents agreed upon."

ALL NEGRO RECRUITS WILL BE SENT TO NORFOLK FOR COOK, STEWARD TRAINING

Call 6-28-40
Kansas City Mo

White Enlisted Men Will Go to New Aviation Bases and Trade Schools; Colored to Mess Corps

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The United States Navy Recruiting Station in the courthouse at Kansas City has received word from Washington that 4,700 recruits are wanted for the Navy during July.

Of this number, 200 colored men are wanted to be "sent to Norfolk for training as mess attendants, cooks and stewards."

White recruits will be sent to various stations for training as sailors, 1200 of them going to Great Lakes, Ill., for nine weeks of preliminary training. They then will be routed to the Pacific Coast, the Hawaiian area and to new aviation bases and trade schools.

For recruit trining, 1250 will go to the San Diego Training Station, 1250 to Norfolk and 800 to Newport.

All of the Negro recruits will join the mess corps.

Despite the great need for fighting men in the navy, Negroes still can do nothing but cook in Uncle Sam's naval service.

Since October 1, a total of 34,372 men have enlisted in the navy through 35 recruiting stations.

NAVY, NEGROES IN- 1940

Honor Man

JAMES HENRY SKIPPER, mess attendant, third class, United States Navy, has been selected as the honor man for class No. 12 which completed training on Friday this week at the United States Naval Training Station, Norfolk, Va.

Young Skipper is a native of Portsmouth,. He is 21 years of age. He attended Norfolk High School in Portsmouth where he played football. He hopes to become an officer's steward in the near future and wishes to be assigned to a destroyer for duty.

Race Girl Named Editor of Hunter College Weekly

NEW YORK—(ANP)—Miss Shirley Simpson, 19-year old Hunter College student, this week became the first Negro to be elected editor-in-chief of the Hunter Bulletin, weekly newspaper.

Miss Simpson, active in all college affairs, will hold the office until graduation next June.

Mobile, Ala. Press
July 12, 1940

Four Colored Youths Signed Up for Navy

Four colored youths have enlisted in the United States navy, the naval recruiting station in the federal building announced today, as it continued to sign recruits in answer to the nation's defense call. The enlistees are: Eddie Cole, Plateau; Willie L. James, Tuscaloosa; Clarence A. Jefferson, Mobile, and Eddie Williams, Molino, Fla.

Today J. E. Green, officer in charge of the station, was visiting towns in various sections of the state in an effort to secure more men. He will visit Jackson, Uriah, Atmore, Flomaton and other points before returning to Mobile.

Does Army Really Want Men?

Somewhere on the road between here and Norfolk, Va., there may be a tired colored man who will tell you readily two things about himself.

His name is Henry Edmondson, and he wants to get into the military service of the United States.

He's on the way to Norfolk because another man told him Negroes are being admitted into the navy there just now. Although he has been told that the best he can expect is a mess boy's position—or more likely, just a laboring job in the navy yard, he's decided to try anyway.

He figures he might as well because since he first made application to the U. S. Army he has traveled from Dallas, Texas, his home.

He says he was signed up temporarily in Dallas, then sent to Austin—at his own expense. From Austin he was shifted on to San Antonio and then directed to New York.

All of this traveling was done at his own expense—which means he has hitch-hiked his way. Because his desire to join the army made him quit his job as a mechanic in Dallas. And you don't have money if you're not working.

Just 26 years old, single, Edmondson says a white friend of his was in the marines, rejoined and wanted him to sign up. That, of course, was impossible. They don't take Negroes in the marines at all.

So then he tried the army. He wasn't even discouraged when in San Antonio they told him New York was the nearest place they knew where he might find a place.

He wasn't even discouraged when, in New York, the recruiting station officer didn't even give him a chance to say anything—quickly directed him to come up to Harlem and inquire at The Amsterdam News office about his chances of getting in the army.

He wasn't even discouraged when he finally discovered that unless war broke out, his chances of joining the regular army are very slim.

But he did begin to figure that if he couldn't get in the army he might try the navy.

So—somewhere on the road between here and Norfolk, Va., there is a tired colored man.

Tired, but still hopeful . . .

ALL RACE UNIT FOR NAVY IS IGNORED

WASHINGTON, D.C., Aug. 8—The Navy Department is not even considering the establishment of jim-crow naval training stations in the Virgin Islands for colored personnel, hearings on the second supplemental national defense appropriation bill for 1941 before the House Appropriations Deficiencies Sub-Committee disclose.

Representative Louis Ludlow, Democrat of Indiana, told Secretary of the Navy Frank Knox that the suggestion had been made that provision might be made for training for flying duty and naval service in the Virgin Islands.

"No such proposition is being considered at the present time," Secretary Knox told Mr. Ludlow.

Enlistment of colored men in the Navy at the present time is restricted to the messmen's branch, added Admiral Harold R. Stark, Chief of Naval Operations, while Filipinos at the present time are being excluded from enlisting even in the messmen's branch.

KNOX, ON THE SPOT, ADMITS NO PLACE FOR NEGRO IN NAVY

Recently appointed Secretary of Navy Frank Knox squirmed uncomfortably Tuesday, when questioned on the navy policy of barring Negroes from enlistment and training in that branch of national defense.

He was questioned by Rep. Louis Ludlow (D. Ind.) before the House Appropriations Committee considering the second national defense appropriation bill for 1941. Knox's discomfiture was apparent when Ludow asked him about training of colored people in the navy.

Obviously on the spot about a suggestion for training Negroes for aviation and general naval service in the Virgin Islands, Knox evasively replied:

"That goes into the very heart of naval policy. I have not gone far enough into it to answer that question." When Ludlow insisted upon an answer for the record, the newly named Secretary of the Navy admitted that "no such proposition is being considered at the present time."

Knox, publisher of the Chicago Daily News, has posed as the Negro's friend. Observers, however, have accused him on various occasions of using the columns of his newspaper to play up the Negro in his most unfavorable light.

At the same hearing army officials said that there has been no difficulty in getting Negroes to volunteer for service in the army, and that there is a long waiting list of Negroes seeking to enlist. The place of the Negro in the armed forces occupied the attention of the appropriations committee following complaints on the training of members of that race in the national defense program.

Gen. George C. Marshall, army chief of staff, asked by Ludlow if a recent act of congress calling for transfer of materials for training of Negro pilots had been complied with, replied:

"As to pilots, there is no such thing as colored aviation at the present time." He added, however, that the army is complying fully with an act of congress providing "that no Negro, because of race, shall be excluded from enlistment in the army for service with colored military units now organized or to be organized for such service."

In reference to training in aviation for Negroes, Marshall said he was of the opinion that the CAA "is the proper place" for the start or beginning to be made.

Question Of Negroes In Navy New Defense Issue

No Changes Contemplated, Assert Officers

SEP 22 1940

—With all of the country thrilled at the statement from the White House to the effect that Negroes would have a fuller participation in the military units now planned under the National Defense program, nothing as yet has been said about the expansion of the naval service for Negroes, with the United States planning a "two-ocean navy."

As is generally known, the navy is the President's pet and his chief interests lie with that department, having served in the World War as assistant secretary of the navy under Josephus Daniels.

No changes are contemplated in the status of the colored recruits to the navy, according to the personnel officers of that branch of the service, although there are many new ships building and many more planned to increase the strength of the fleet to care for the Atlantic and Pacific oceans.

It had been recently suggested that the navy department assign some of its older ships for training Negroes exclusively, inasmush as Negroes are consigned to separate regiments and not integrated into the military service. And more credence is lent this situation by the "trading" of outmoded destroyers to foreign governments in exchange for concessions abroad.

However, no action has been taken along this line, although it is regarded as the only practical solution to the problem of what to do with Negroes in the navy when they seek positions other than those of menial grades.

THE NAVY CAN DO NO WRONG!

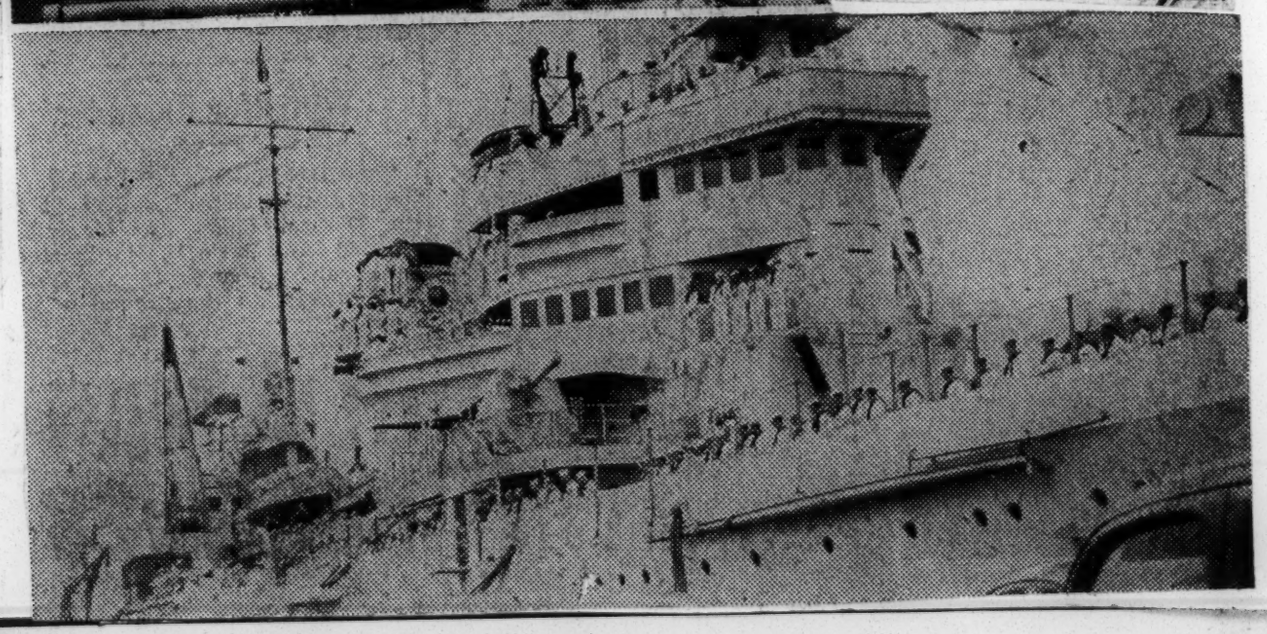
Pittsburgh Courier

DEC 14 1940

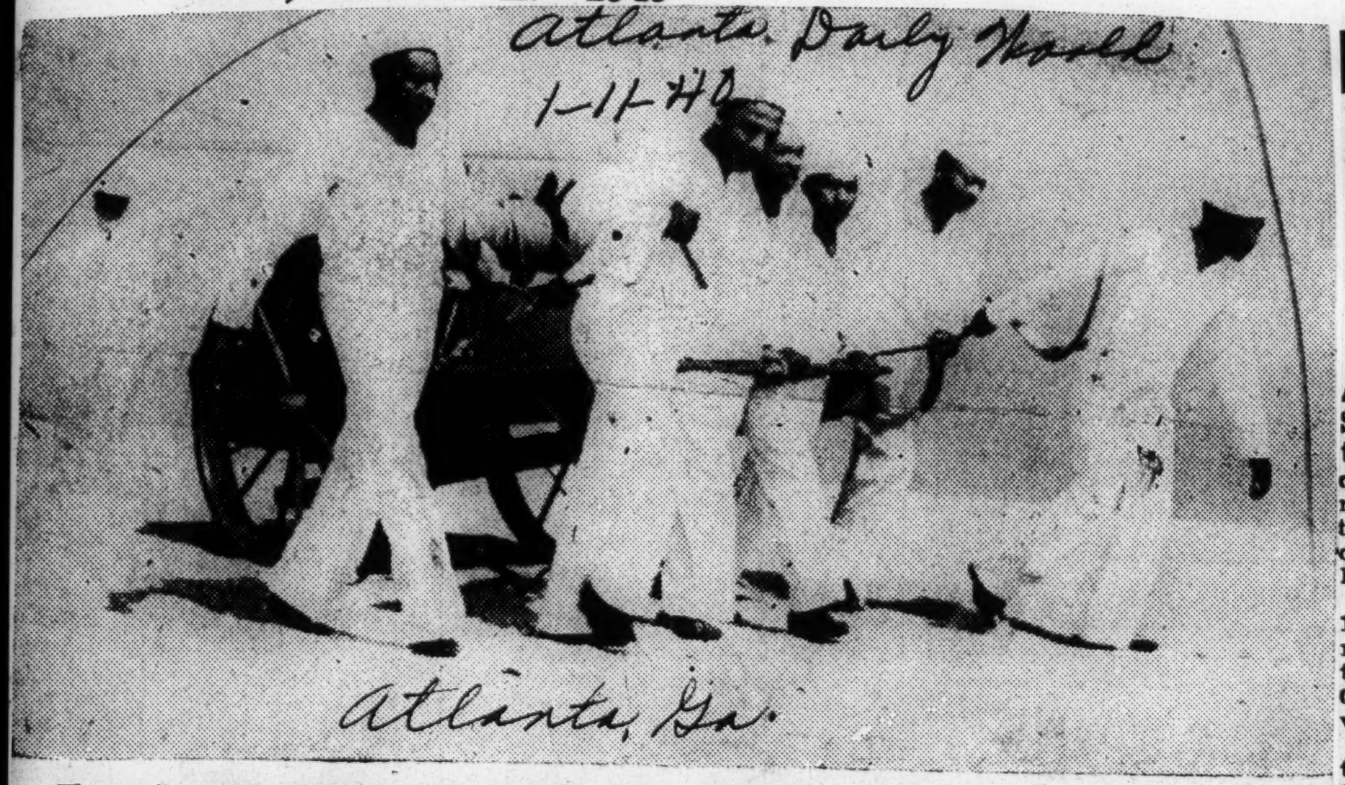
Because they wrote a letter to The Pittsburgh Courier protesting segregation in the United States Navy, the three Americans pictured above were fired last week. The Navy can discriminate, refuse Negro sailors their Constitutional rights and ignore all democratic principles. But to protest against such treatment means dismissal from the service. Besides the three boys above, ten others were fired for demanding their rights.

The boys above, left to right, are: Floyd Owens, Theodore L. Hansbrough and Shannon Goodwin. All three were aboard the U.S.S. Philadelphia, the same ship which was inspected by President Roosevelt in 1938. The President is shown here aboard the U.S.S. Philadelphia. Strangely, the President saw no violation of democratic rights then, nor has he indicated that he has heard of any since, despite the fact that hundreds of civic organizations have protested the dismissal of the thirteen Negro sailors.

Bottom photo is of the ship itself. On this monster of the sea discrimination and un-American activities have thrived for years.



NAVY, NEGROES IN- 1940



These six hardy members of the nation's only all-Negro Coast Guard station are shown as they swung into action during the stormy period which gripped the Atlantic sea coast this week. The station is located at Pea Island, N. C., adjacent to the rock-bound Carolina coast, often referred to as the "graveyard of ships." (Acme.)

Marine Corps Still Lily White Despite Funds

Journal and Guide
3-23-40
Norfolk, Va.

WASHINGTON, D. C.—Despite increases authorized in the commissioned and enlisted personnel of the Marine Corps, that branch of the naval establishment continues lily-white.

The Navy Department appropriation bill for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1941, now pending in the Senate, provides for a strength of 1,345 commissioned officers, and an average strength of 19,500 enlisted men, including the Marine Band.

The pay for these officers and enlisted men is contained in the 1941 regular budget known as "A" budget, which takes no account of emergency increases and provides simply for an increase in the Marine Corps of 1,000 men, which would bring its strength to 20,000 enlisted men at the end of the fiscal year 1941.

The 1941 "B" budget provides for the employment of 50 retired officers on active duty, 214 junior officers of the Marine Corps Reserve on active duty, increase in regular enlisted strength from an average of 19,500 to 25,000 men, and the recall of 146 members of class 1, Marine Corps Reserve, to active duty.

The appropriation act for the current fiscal year provided for an average enlisted strength of the Marine Corps of 18,500 men. The Marine Corps was in the process of recruiting the additional men required to bring it up to that strength when the emergency was declared and the President authorized the enlistment of 1,000 men as promptly as possible and no in equal increments throughout the year.

PERSONNEL IS HELD TO MINIMUM

Pittsburgh Courier

WASHINGTON, Feb. 22—Although Admiral Harold R. Stark, Chief of Naval Operations, admits that a world conflagration is threatened, and the navy is being expanded to meet the contemplated needs of national defense, colored personnel is still held to a minimum.

At the end of the fiscal year, 1939, there were only 2,807 colored men enlisted in the Navy. The total enlisted personnel was 116,000. Of the 10,447 commissioned and warrant officers none was colored.

The total enlisted personnel of the Navy as fixed by appropriations for the current fiscal year, including the additional 29,000 authorized by the order of the President of September 8, 1939, is 145,000. The 145,000 strength is estimated to be reached by June 30.

A total enlisted strength of 150,000 men is allowed by the Navy Department appropriation bill for 1941. The additional 5,000 men are to be recruited into the service by January 1, 1941.

The personnel increases are necessary on account of additional vessels to be commissioned in the regularly constituted fleet and to increase the complements on ships already in commission. They are also required for the additional ships and aircraft which have been placed in commission due to the neutrality patrol of surface craft and aircraft.

The number of colored men who will be allowed to enlist in the additional 5,000 men to be recruited into the service by January 1, next is not available, but if traditional naval policy is followed only a sufficient number to meet mess service requirements will be recruited.

Hearings on the Navy Department appropriation bill for 1941 developed the fact that the navy is choosy about white as well as colored enlistments. It employs a selective enlistment system.

According to Rear Admiral C W. Nimtz, chief of the Bureau of Navigation, the Navy believes "in getting young men of the very highest quality, who have an average high school education and who have a good reputation in their communities, and who can meet physical standards and pass intelligence tests."

COLORED COLLEGES NOT INCLUDED IN U. S. NAVY'S EXPANSION PROGRAM

Negroes Attending Schools Where Units are Located, But It Is Doubtful If They Will Be Eligible for Training.

WASHINGTON, D. C., Feb. 29.—The 1941 naval appropriations bill, now pending before a Senate appropriations sub-committee, carries a total of $164,000 for the peacetime training of young college men to become Naval Reserve officers so as to provide for rapid naval expansion in a national emergency, but no unit of this corps has been established in a colored college or university.

Units of the Naval Reserve Officers' Training Corps are located at Yale, Harvard, Northwestern, Georgia Tech, University of Washington, University of California, University of California at Los Angeles, Tulane, and Minnesota.

According to Commander F. V. Lake, the operation of this corps now consists of a voluntary 4-year enrollment of about 1,660 students under the close and personal instruction of line officers of the Regular Navy.

Each student devotes at least four classroom hours a week to the study of naval science, in addition to much outside preparation time. He participates in one or more summer sea trips in a combatant ship, where he converts into practice the theory of his winter studies.

The student learns seamanship, gunnery, ordnance, nautical astronomy, and navigation. He gains knowledge of military law, communications, tactics, naval history, and administration. He also familiarizes himself with naval aviation, marine and electrical engineering.

These men are required to pass the Naval Academy physical examination. Commander Lake says they sacrifice about one-quarter of their recreation and vacation time to prepare themselves for the national defense. In return for this, he adds, the Federal Government provides the uniforms, textbooks, equipment, a small compensation for juniors and seniors, and transportation to and from the cruising ships with subsistence while on board for all students.

Under legislation increasing the authorized naval R.O.T.C. enrollment to 2,400; two new units were established in 1939, one new unit in 1940, and two new units are planned for 1941.

56 ENLISTED MEN ENTER ANNAPOLIS, NONE ARE NEGROES

By LOUIS LAUTIER

WASHINGTON, D. C., Jan. 4.—At the end of the fiscal year 1939, there were 2,807 colored men in the United States Navy among the total enlisted personnel of 110,010 men.

The annual report of Charles Edison, Acting Secretary of the Navy, shows that appropriations for 1939 allowed an average enlisted strength of 107,550 men. With this allowance it was possible to maintain the larger ships at 85 per cent of the war complement, the minimum under which they can be safely operated.

Submarines were maintained at 100 per cent complement. Whether any colored men served aboard submarines was not disclosed.

56 ENLISTED MEN ENTER ANNAPOLIS; ALL WHITE

Fifty-six enlisted men entered the Navay Academy under the quota of appointments allowed the Secretary of the Navy, one of them was colored.

Mr. Edison disclosed that 8,671 line officers are necessary to fully man, with peacetime allowances, the Navy now authorized and building. Legislation enacted by the last Congress, increased the authorized line officer strength from 6,531 to 7,562.

6,877 LINE OFFICERS ON LIST; NONE COLORED

On June 30, there were 6,877 line officers on the active list. None of them was colored.

The deficiency in officer strength was met in part by the assignment of aviation cadets to sea duty as they graduated from the training station at Pensacola and by the annual increment of graduates from the Naval Academy. No colored youth has ever been given training as a naval aviation cadet nor has one ever graduated from the Naval Academy.

Although the requirements of an expanding naval establishment emphasize the urgency of speeding up the rate of increase of personnel to enable the Marine Corps to carry out the missions assigned by the Navy in basic plans, the Marine Corps still maintains its color bar.

Marine Corps Still Lily White Despite Increase

Comparison of Marine Corps personnel for the fiscal years 1941, 1940, 1939, and 1938

	Estimate, 1941	Appropriation, 1940	Actual, 1939	Actual, 1938
Officers, active list:				
Commissioned officers	1,345	1,279	1,213	1,071
Extra numbers in grade †	(18)	(12)	(6)	11
Com. warrant and warrant officers	146	145	145	14
Aviation duty	(218)	(186)	(189)	(184)
Officers, retired list	646	578	515	481
Enlisted men, active duty	19,500	18,500	17,497	17,054
Aviation duty	(377)	(296)	(286)	(276)
Court-martial prisoners	50	85	41	72
Enlisted, retired list	835	779	720	674
Class I, Fleet Reserve (transferred)	844	767	718	666
Class I, Fleet Reserve (assigned)	3,352	1,600	.....	.....

† Extra numbers in grade are now in the grades of colonel and lieutenant colonel, and are provided for by recent legislation creating additional numbers in grade for duty in the paymaster's and quartermaster's departments, except 2 colonels, who are extra numbers in grade, one appointed under the act of August 29, 1916, and the other under the act of June 15, 1938.

(‡) Included in total number.

WASHINGTON

Despite increases authorized in the commissioned and enlisted personnel of the Marine Corps, that branch of the U.S. naval establishment continues lily-white.

The Navy Department appropriation bill for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1941, now pending in the Senate, provides for a strength of 1,345 commissioned officers, 146 commissioned warrant and warrant officers, and an average strength of 19,500 enlisted men, including the marine band.

Provisions Separate

The pay for these officers and enlisted men is contained in "A" budget, which takes no account of emergency increases and provides simply for an increase in the Marine Corps of 1,000 men, which would bring its strength to 20,000 enlisted men at the end of the fiscal year 1941.

The 1941 "B" budget provides for the employment of 50 retired officers on active duty, 214 junior officers, and 146 members of Class I, Marine Corps Reserve on active duty, and an increase in regular enlisted strength from an average of 19,500 to 25,000 men.